

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/7/2010 has been entered.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Terryence F. Chapman on 6/29/2010.

Please amend the claims as follows:

In claim 32, lines 1-4, please change to:

32. An apparatus for culling small objects in a system for shading a three-dimensional computer graphics image comprising:

a display;

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means for subdividing [[a]] the display on which the image is to be viewed into a plurality of rectangular areas; ...

Cancel claim 35.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 29-34 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the cited prior art does not disclose or render obvious the combination of elements recited in the claims as whole.

Specifically, the cited prior art fails to disclose or render obvious the following limitations:

As per independent claim 29, the claimed:

for each rectangular area deriving a list of objects in the image which may be visible in that rectangular area;

determining whether or not a bounding box surrounding the object covers any of the pixel sampling points;

culling the object if the bounding box misses all the pixel sampling points;

testing each sampling point against each edge of the object;

determining from the test performed whether or not the object covers any pixel sampling point; and

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adding or rejecting the object from the list in dependence on the result of the determination.

As per independent claim 32, this claim is also allowed for the same reasons as independent claim 29.

The applicant points out how the claimed subject matter overcomes the prior art used in the previous rejection in the remarks filed 5/7/2010 from the middle of page 5 to the top of page 6.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DANIEL F. HAJNIK whose telephone number is (571)272-7642. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30A-5:00P).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ulka Chauhan can be reached on (571) 272-7782. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Daniel F Hajnik/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2628